



Art Jameel and the V&A announce shortlisted projects for the 7th edition of the Jameel Prize, with a focus on moving image and digital media

‘Jameel Prize: Moving Images’
Porter Gallery, V&A South Kensington
November 30, 2024 – March 16, 2025

May 29, 2024 – Today, [Art Jameel](#) and [the V&A](#) announce the shortlisted projects for the 7th edition of the Jameel Prize, the V&A’s international award for contemporary art and design inspired by Islamic tradition. The triennial competition, founded in 2009 and worth £25,000, focuses this year on moving image and digital media, shortlisting seven finalists from over 300 applicants. The ‘Jameel Prize: Moving Images’ shortlisted artists are: **Sadik Kwaish Alfraji, Jawa El Khash, Alia Farid, Zahra Malkani, Khandakar Ohida, Marrim Akashi Sani**, and a joint submission by **Ramin Haerizadeh, Rokni Haerizadeh** and **Hesam Rahmanian**. Together, the works celebrate Islamic heritage and its relevance to contemporary life, covering a wide range of thematics – from domesticity and spirituality to ecology and revolution.

Applicants were sought through an open call in 2023 looking for artists working with film, video and time-based media, alongside those engaging with established and emerging digital technologies. The international jury for the 7th edition comprises of artists **Morehshin Allahyari** and **Ajlan Gharem** (winner of the previous Jameel Prize ‘Poetry to Politics’), curator **Sadia Shirazi**, and academic **Laura U. Marks**, and chaired by V&A Director **Tristram Hunt**. The winner of the Prize will be announced on November 27, 2024, after which all the finalists’ works will be displayed at the V&A, opening November 30, 2024. After its run at the V&A, ‘Jameel Prize: Moving Images’ will go on tour in 2025 to national and international venues, including to Hayy Jameel in Jeddah.

Spanning film, sculpture, installation, sound, performance and VR, the finalists’ works engage with issues relating to water, ecology, landscape and spirituality, looking at the ways in which extractive industries and political dynamics shape the environmental and social fabric of the Middle East and South Asia. Others address the writing of history – examining the making of monuments and their deconstruction through acts of iconoclasm, or forging alternative approaches to museums and collections. Many works offer personal testaments to community, resilience, and connection, with hand-drawn animation and photography used for powerful storytelling.

The chair of the Jameel Prize jury, V&A Director, Tristram Hunt said, “I am delighted that we have selected such an impressive shortlist for the seventh Jameel Prize. Over the last 15 years the Prize has explored diverse responses to Islamic civilisation in many media. Over this time, too, the range of eligible work has expanded and diversified, allowing us to concentrate on digital media and the moving image for this edition. The V&A is delighted to continue its partnership with Art Jameel in creating a bold and intriguing exhibition.”

Director of Art Jameel, Antonia Carver, said: “Art Jameel began its partnership with the V&A in 2006, collaborating to transform the Islamic art galleries at the museum, before launching the Jameel Prize, to track and celebrate the enduring influence of Islamic design and traditions on the most compelling contemporary art of today. The Prize and its touring exhibitions are dynamic -- innovating and growing in breadth and focus each iteration. We congratulate the stellar cohort of artists in this seventh edition of the Prize and Rachel Dedman, Jameel Curator of the Contemporary Middle East at the V&A.”

Through the past six editions, the Jameel Prize has received applications from more than 1,700 artists from over 40 countries, exhibited the work of 56 artists and designers, and toured to 18 venues globally.

The seven finalists are:

Sadik Kwaish Alfraji (Iraq, based in the Netherlands)

Sadik Alfraji’s practice is centred around storytelling, drawing upon personal and collective memory. In ‘Jameel Prize: Moving Images’, the artist will show two hand-drawn animations that are devoted to his parents. This first one, ***A Thread of Light Between My Mother’s Fingers and Heaven (2023)***, has at its centre Alfraji’s mother’s hand, which he describes as a sacred palm. From it flow images both mystical and mundane, including moments of their day-to-day lives in Iraq – eating together, singing together, as she feeds, protects, loves and provides.

A Short Story in the Eyes of Hope (2023) is a biography of the artist’s father, and his search for a better life. The sound in this work is particularly important – overlaying the film are traditional burial prayers that are sung in Iraqi funerals. Shown alongside some original drawings, Alfraji’s powerful films are driven by the intimate, tactile quality of the hand-made.

Jawa El Khash (Syria, based in Canada)

The Upper Side of The Sky (2019) by Syrian artist Jawa El Khash is a 3D simulation that investigates and resurrects Syrian archaeology and ecology that has been endangered or destroyed as a result of the ongoing civil war. The visitor moves through the digital world and eco-system that El Khash has created, exploring lost architecture from the ancient desert city of Palmyra. At its core is the notion that in the digital realm such monuments – whether tangible architecture or ephemeral plant-life – might live on in an imagined world, as a form of digital archaeology. Visitors will be able to explore both daytime and nighttime versions of the world, accompanied by a display of the artist’s research.

Alia Farid (Kuwait/Puerto-Rico)

Alia Farid’s works examine tensions over resources created by colonial borders in the Arabian Gulf, focussing on the impacted conditions of everyday people and cultures. ***Chibayish*** (2022 and 2023) is one such project, which emerged out of years of research and time spent with communities in the southern region of Iraq, close to the border with Kuwait. The central protagonist of the resulting film is a marshland along the Euphrates River. To navigate it, Farid documents her interactions with three young residents who live there with their families, as they herd water buffalo and describe to her the local geography, naming who is still there and who has been displaced. Notable is the environmental degradation caused by the oil industry, which the residents navigate as the destruction fundamentally transforms their home and traditions.

In a related sculptural work, Farid creates monumental versions of drinking fountains and vessels that are used across the Arabian Gulf to gather and distribute water. Historically, such receptacles were set out and maintained by individuals as a way to share water across a community. In recent years, this practice has subsided because the source of water has shifted from freshwater river resources in Iraq to desalination plants, which contribute to energy extraction and alter local ecologies. A new single version sculpture from her 2019 work, *In Lieu of What Was*, installed alongside the films, alludes to this history.

Ramin Haerizadeh, Rokni Haerizadeh, Hesam Rahmanian (Iran, based in UAE)

Ramin Haerizadeh, Rokni Haerizadeh and Hesam Rahmanian are Iranian artists based in the UAE. The animation *If I had two paths, I would choose a third (2020)* explores the toppling of statues, the act of iconoclasm, and the life of the icon after that. The work assembles documentation and media coverage of key moments in Middle Eastern history – from the 1953 coup d’etat in Iran, to the start of the Iraq war in 2003 – and the role of monuments, statues, and works of art (the disfigured Iranian Modernist monument by Bahman Mohasses appears to come alive in the city theatre’s basement) in these political power dynamics.

The artists refer to this style of moving image work as ‘fluid painting’: every frame is an individual print-out that has been hand-painted. These interventions reflect shifts in perspective: from fantastical creatures inspired by those found in the thirteenth century manuscript, Aja’ib Al Makhluqat to the microscopic, with details resembling microbiological growth. Icons are portrayed not as static objects, but as evolving entities. The work reflects upon the making and unmaking of power through the monument and its destruction, as well as the artists’ desire to reclaim and reframe such subject matter, to place it under a microscope.

Khandakar Ohida (India)

Khandakar Ohida is an artist from India. Her film *Dream Your Museum (2022)* is a portrait of her uncle, Khandakar Selim, who has built an extraordinary collection of objects and memorabilia over the last 50 years. The film documents the collection as it was displayed in his traditional mud home, which has since been torn down. The work challenges the nature of museums in the Indian context, as bastions of nationalism with little room for alternative narratives. As members of India’s Muslim community, both Selim and the artist confront the socio-political hierarchies that shape identity, offering a nuanced exploration of cultural representation and belonging. The film is accompanied by an installation of objects from Selim’s collection, which he transports in simple metal trunks. The portable museum is displayed informally, as a jumble of curious objects, intended to defy the authority, surveillance, and prohibition of touch that one finds in most museums. The artist invites us to envision a future where cultural heritage is liberated from the constraints of convention and exclusivity.

Zahra Malkani (Pakistan)

Zahra Malkani’s work brings together the sonic and the sacred, exploring how mystical and devotional practices in Pakistan intersect musical and oral traditions, in the particular context of water. Since 2019, the artist has been collecting an audio archive of devotional sounds and traditions on the Indus River and the Indian Ocean, as part of her project *A Ubiquitous Wetness (2023)*. The work explores how these sonic practices constitute a form of resistance against the ecological and infrastructural violence being felt along the coasts and rivers of Pakistan. Malkani’s research manifests as listening sessions, performance,



soundscapes, mixes, and publications – whose designs are inspired in part by the palimpsestic nature of Islamic manuscripts. A wealth of elements will be brought together in the installation in ‘Jameel Prize: Moving Images’.

Marrim Akashi Sani (Iraq/Iran/USA)

Marrim Akashi Sani is an Iraqi-Iranian artist, writer, designer, and filmmaker from Detroit, Michigan. Her *Muharram (2023)* photo series subtly explores the complex and ambivalent process of adapting and assimilating, particularly in relation to religious practice. Sani’s intimate images of people, and the details of private domestic spaces that they document, capture practices around the commemoration of Muharram, a sacred month in Islam, and explore the ways in which this community has retained and evolved their faith in the American Midwest.

- ENDS -

For further press information about ‘Jameel Prize: Moving Images’, please contact Thuli Maseko at the V&A on t.maseko@vam.ac.uk, or Ruba Alsweel on behalf of Art Jameel on ruba@artjameel.org (not for publication).

Notes to Editors

- ‘Jameel Prize: Moving Images’ at the V&A, London, runs from November 30, 2024 – March 16, 2025
- ‘Jameel Prize: Moving Images’ will showcase work by the seven shortlisted artists: Sadik Kwaish Alfraji, Jawa El Khash, Alia Farid, Ramin Haerizadeh, Rokni Haerizadeh & Hesam Rahmanian, Khandakar Ohida, Zahra Malkani, and Marrim Akashi Sani.
- After its run at the V&A, ‘Jameel Prize: Moving Images’ will go on tour in 2025 to national and international venues, including to Hayy Jameel in Jeddah.
- ‘Jameel Prize: Moving Images’ is curated by the V&A’s Jameel Curator of Contemporary Art from the Middle East, Rachel Dedman.
- ‘Jameel Prize: Moving Images’ is a free exhibition.
- A selection of press images is available to download free of charge from pressimages.vam.ac.uk.

Social Media

V&A: Instagram [@vamuseum](https://www.instagram.com/vamuseum) | Facebook [@VictoriaandAlbertMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/VictoriaandAlbertMuseum) | Twitter [@V and A](https://twitter.com/V_and_A)
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About the Jameel Prize

The Jameel Prize, founded in partnership with Art Jameel, was conceived after the renovation of the V&A's Jameel Gallery of Islamic Art. The gallery is an outstanding presentation of the rich artistic heritage of the Islamic Middle East, and the Prize aims to raise awareness of the thriving interaction between contemporary practice and the great historical legacy of the region. It contributes to a broader understanding of Islamic culture as well as its place in the contemporary world.

Launched in 2009, the winner of the first Jameel Prize was **Afroz Amighi** for her work *1001 Pages* (2008), an intricate hand-cut screen made from the woven plastic used to construct refugee tents. In 2011 **Rachid Koraïchi** was awarded the prize, for his work *Les Maîtres Invisibles (The Invisible Masters)*, 2008), a group of embroidered cloth banners which display Arabic calligraphy, symbols and ciphers to explore the lives and legacies of the 14 great mystics of Islam. In 2013 the winner of Jameel Prize 3 was **Dice Kayek**, a Turkish fashion label established in 1992 by Ece and Ayşe Ege, for their series *Istanbul Contrast*, a collection that evokes Istanbul's architectural and artistic heritage. This was the first time the Jameel Prize was awarded to designers. In 2016, the winner of Jameel Prize 4 was **Ghulam Mohammad**, who trained in the Islamic tradition of miniature painting, for his works of paper collage. In 2018 the first ever joint winners of Jameel Prize 5 were **Mehdi Moutashar** — awarded for his bold work of minimalist abstraction rooted in Islamic geometry and **Marina Tabassum** — for her visionary Bait ur Rouf mosque built in 2012 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. In 2021, **Ajlan Gharem** was announced as winner of the sixth Jameel Prize, for his work *Paradise Has Many Gates*. This work, shown in the exhibition titled *Jameel Prize: Poetry to Politics*, took the form of a mosque made of chicken wire, addressing the complex legacies of Islam and its politicisation worldwide.

From its inception, the Jameel Prize has toured internationally, to countries including Lebanon, Morocco, Turkey, Russia, Singapore, Korea, the United States, Argentina, and Chile. Since 2018, the Jameel Prize has been triennial, with each edition focussed on an artistic or design discipline. The sixth edition, *Jameel Prize: Poetry to Politics*, was devoted to disciplines of design, while this upcoming edition focusses upon moving image and digital practices.

About V&A South Kensington

The V&A is a family of museums dedicated to the power of creativity. V&A South Kensington is a world of extraordinary global creativity, with unmissable exhibitions, experiences and educational programmes for all. One of London's most iconic buildings, it is home to national collections of art, design, fashion, photography and furniture to theatre, performance, architecture, and ceramics, as well as the UK's National Art Library. It is a place where everyone can experience a story of creativity that spans 5,000 years and every creative discipline, which brings that story to life through programmes and activities for all ages and specialisms, and world-leading research and conservation.

About the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Art at the V&A

Art Jameel has partnered with the V&A since 2006, with the opening of the Jameel Gallery of Islamic Art by Mohammed Abdul Latif Jameel, who dedicated the Gallery to the memory of his parents, Mrs Nafisa and Mr Abdul Latif Jameel, the late founder of Abdul Latif Jameel. This was followed by the establishment



of the Jameel Prize for contemporary art and design inspired by Islamic tradition. Highlights include the Ardabil Carpet, the world oldest dated carpet and one of the largest, most beautiful and historically important.

About Art Jameel

[Art Jameel](#) supports artists and creative communities. Founded and supported by the Jameel family philanthropies, the independent organisation is headquartered in Saudi Arabia and the UAE and works globally. Art Jameel's programmes – across exhibitions, commissions, research, learning and community-building – are grounded in a dynamic understanding of the arts as fundamental to life and accessible to all.

Art Jameel's two institutions – [Hayy Jameel](#), a dedicated complex for the arts and creativity in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, and [Jameel Arts Centre](#), an innovative institution for contemporary art and ideas in Dubai, UAE – are complemented by digital initiatives plus collaborations with major institutional partners and a network of practitioners across the world.